UNITED NATIONS **A S**

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/944
S/1998/468
4 June 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda items 64 and 81
COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY
MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 3 June 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, dated 1 June 1998, in connection with the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter together with the annexed statement issued as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(Signed) Alyaksandr SYCHOU
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

[Original: Russian]

Statement of 1 June 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus

Belarus received the news of the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan with alarm and concern. The series of nuclear tests that were conducted pushed the world, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, towards the proliferation of nuclear weapons, constitute a new round of the nuclear arms race and create considerable additional difficulties in the way of the further reduction of nuclear weapons. These actions contradict the consistent efforts of the world community to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime at the global and regional levels as an important factor in international stability and security.

Belarus, which a few years ago made the historic choice to renounce the nuclear potential it possessed and is a party to a number of the most important agreements in the field of nuclear disarmament, cannot but feel a special sense of responsibility in this respect and be alarmed by this turn of events.

Belarus calls on all countries that have not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and possess military nuclear programmes to review their current nuclear policy, accede to that Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and promote the development of treaties to prohibit the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, in all of which mankind places its hopes for a nuclear-free world in the twenty-first century.

The events of recent days have heightened our alarm at the possibility of a chain reaction of nuclear proliferation not only in the south Asia region, but also beyond its limits. The absence of legal obligations on the international community creates fertile soil for such a development. As is known, on the basis of its consistent anti-nuclear policy and of the threats to the fate of future generations, of the European continent and of the world as a whole, Belarus has called and calls on all countries, in the light of present-day realities, to support the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free area in central and eastern Europe. Belarus is convinced that the implementation of this idea will strengthen security and confidence in Europe, contribute to the geographical non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and constitute an important step towards the further strengthening of peace and stability in Europe and throughout the world.

We believe that all non-nuclear-weapon States could assume agreed responsibilities to renounce once and for all the deployment of nuclear weapons in their territory. Belarus calls on the nuclear Powers to assume obligations not under any circumstances to deploy nuclear weapons in the territory of non-nuclear-weapon States.